

REMARKSClaim Status

Claims 6-25 are pending after entry of this amendment. Claims 1-5 are canceled without prejudice to presenting these and similar claims in one or more continuing applications. We expressly traverse the formal rejection of claims 1 and 2 since we believe that they are properly supported in the application as filed.

Claims 6 and 15 are amended without prejudice. These amendments are not made to overcome the art-based rejection, as there are many reasons why the claims are patentable in their previously presented form (some of the reasons are discussed below). These amended claims continue to broadly define steganographic embedding (claim 6) and hiding (claim 15) techniques. We expect a wide range of equivalent arrangements will fall within the scope of these steganographic techniques.

Claim 9, 18 and 19 are amended in an editorial manner and not in response to the art. These claims now even better conform to their base claims.

Claims 21-25 are newly presented and are believed supported by the application as filed.

Art-based Rejection

Claims 6-20 stand rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,606,609 (hereafter referred to as "the Houser patent"). We respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 15

Claim 15 recites decoding a steganographically hidden identifier from a media signal.

The Houser patent at Col. 15, lines 15-22 discloses a security object embedder. In fact, there doesn't appear to be any mention at the cited passage of how to decode steganographically hidden information at all.

The so-called "watermark" referred by the Houser patent does not seem akin to the recited steganography. The Houser patent watermark is designed to provide some form of visual indicia that is displayed or printed (e.g., "a difficult to forge image or

icon," see the Houser patent at Col. 16, line 61), and the Houser patent fails to describe any method for decoding an object identifier from this visual indicia.

Claim 15 further recites communicating a decoded identifier to an on-line registry to obtain usage rights information associated with the media signal.

While the Houser patent at the cited Col. 8, lines 50-65 (and Fig. 2) mentions a photographic image system, an installer module and a standard computer, there doesn't appear to be any discussion of usage rules obtained from an on-line registry through communication of a decoded identifier.

In this regard we note that a so-called "security object" (an embedding and linking technology (OLE) as discussed in the Houser patent in its abstract, lines 2-3) may provide some verification tools (see Col. 19, lines 17-24 and Col. 15, lines 18-21), but does not seem concerned with usage rights obtained from an online registry through use of at least a decoded identifier as claimed.

(This object embedding and linking technology (OLE) is also not understood to hide an identifier through subtle alterations of data representing at least a portion of a media signal as claimed.)

Additional shortcomings of the Houser patent need not be belabored at this time.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 18 and 19

Claim 18 recites that the identifier is redundantly embedded in a media signal. Recall that the identifier is hidden through subtle alterations of data representing at least a portion of the media signal.

This embedding technique is unlike the OLE technique mentioned in Col. 7.

Claim 19 recites that the identifier is redundantly embedded in the media signal according to a key. The cited passage at Col. 13, lines 14-20 envisions that a security object (OLE) – itself – including three copies of security information: one unencrypted, one encrypted with a private key and one encrypted with a public key. (See the Houser patent at Col. 8, lines 50-65). This does not suggest redundantly embedding the identifier in the media signal according to key in the manner claimed.

Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claim 6

Many of the above discussed points apply by way of analogy to claim 6.

For example, the cited section at Col. 15, lines 16-24 discusses embedding (and embedders), but not obtaining (or decoding) information steganographically embedded in media content as recited in claim 6.

As discussed above, the so-called "watermark" referred by the House patent does not seem akin to the recited steganography. The Houser patent watermark is designed to provide some form of visual indicia that is displayed or printed (e.g., "a difficult to forge image or icon," see the Houser patent at Col. 16, line 61), and the Houser patent fails to describe any method for decoding an object identifier from this visual indicia.

The Col. 8, lines 50-65 passage is cited as teaching usage rights information obtained from an online resource through communication of obtained auxiliary data. We respectfully disagree. Again, while this passage is understood as teaching a computer, photographic image system, etc., it is not understood to teach communicating auxiliary data to a network resource, wherein the network resource comprises usage rights information catalogued therein, and wherein the usage rights information includes usage rights information that is associated with the media content and receiving the usage rights information there from as claimed.

Additional shortcomings of the Houser patent need not be belabored at this time. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 9 and 10

Claim 9 recites that the auxiliary data is redundantly embedded in media content. Recall that the auxiliary data is embedded through subtle alterations of data representing at least a portion of the media content.

This embedding technique is unlike the object linking and embedding (OLE) technique mentioned in Col. 7.

Claim 10 recites that the auxiliary data is redundantly embedded in the media content according to a key. The cited passage at Col. 13, lines 14-20 envisions that a security object (OLE) – itself – including three copies of security information: one

unencrypted, one encrypted with a private key and one encrypted with a public key. (See the Houser patent at Col. 8, lines 50-65). This does not suggest redundantly embedding auxiliary data in media content according to key in the manner claimed.

Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Remaining Claims

The remaining claims are also believed to recite patentable combinations.

For example, the cited passage of the Houser patent against claim 11 (Col. 18, lines 9-56) are not understood to teach or suggest geometric registration information.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

New Claim 23

The Houser patent is also not understood to teach or suggest the combination recited in claim 23. For example, the Houser patent does not teach or suggest: decoding a steganographically encoded identifier from a media signal, wherein the identifier comprises plural-bits and is hidden in the media signal through changes to data representing at least a portion of the media signal; providing the decoded identifier to an on-line resource to obtain usage rights information associated with the media signal; receiving the usage right information from the on-line resource; and carrying out an action based at least in part on usage rights information.

Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Request for Personal Interview

The undersigned respectfully requests an in-person interview to discuss this Amendment. The Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned to schedule such an interview if he picks up this Amendment prior to the scheduling of such an interview.

Conclusion

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

(Other limitations of the art need not be belabored at this time. We also do not concede that the Houser patent is proper reference. We note in this regard that the present application claims priority to dates earlier than the Houser patent.)

An early notice of allowance is respectfully requested. Nevertheless, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 503-469-4685 if any question remains.

Date: October 24, 2005

Customer No. 23735

Phone: 503-469-4685
FAX: 503-469-4777

Respectfully submitted,

DIGIMARC CORPORATION

By



Steven W. Stewart
Registration No. 45,133